

Issue 38, 09.23.08 New Cabral Ag Center, Citrus Pest Threat, Crop Pollinators and Food for Thought

This month I was honored to speak during the opening ceremonies of the [Robert Cabral Agricultural Center](#) in Stockton. This new facility demonstrates San Joaquin County's commitment to agriculture and is a show-piece of environmentally-friendly design and function. In addition to serving as a new meeting place for the county agricultural community, it is also a one-stop shop housing the county offices of the agricultural commissioner, emergency services and UC Cooperative Extension.

CDFA is also serving the agricultural community through our new [Asian citrus psyllid \(ACP\) website](#), which has comprehensive information on the serious threat this pest insect poses to all California citrus. The ACP is a known vector of the lethal tree disease huanglongbing. Eradication activities against ACP are now underway in an area of San Diego County.



CDFA State Apiary Inspector Gerry Miller (in red shirt) listens as a Yolo County organic farmer describes local plants that provide nutrition to native insect pollinators during the summer months in California.
Photo: A. Woodfork/CDFA

In contrast, at the other end of the insect spectrum, Gerry Miller, CDFA's State Apiary Inspector, participated in a native pollinator workshop last month in Davis with local and out-of-state apiary experts, entomologists, growers and representatives of agricultural associations.

I hope you had a productive summer growing season. Thank you for your support of California agriculture.

A.G. Kawamura

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Secretary A.G. Kawamura spoke this month at the grand opening of the Cabral Agricultural Center in Stockton, San Joaquin County.



The new center is a "green" building with many innovative and environmentally-friendly design features.

Photos: A. Woodfork/CDFA

This diverse group learned more about best management practices—such as native pollinator protection and habitat restoration—that encourage increased populations of these beneficial insects. Such practices can also result in control of erosion and weeds, improvements in water quality and wildlife habitat, and visually enhanced landscapes. Native pollinators will not replace managed bees, but they can play an important role in crop pollination. Next month I will meet with the newly-formed State Apiary Board and help renovate the [UC Davis Laidlaw Honey Bee Research Facility](#).

Finally, two visionaries with different lessons to share about sustainability were in town this month. At a presentation for state government, William McDonough offered his views on ["cradle to cradle" initiatives](#) to promote a cleaner, more sustainable environment. And [Professor Jared Diamond](#), UCLA biologist, biogeographer and Pulitzer Prize-winning author, gave the keynote speech at a UC Davis symposium on agricultural biodiversity. He is a strong proponent of the belief that the adoption of agriculture was "the most important event in the last 50,000 years of human history." I share his sense of urgency that for civilization to advance in the 21st century will require new methods of sustainable agricultural practices.